

SUDBURY URBAN DISTRICT

OR

BOROUGH OF SUDBURY,

IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF WEST SUFFOLK.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR 1908.

(Pursuant to the Regulations of the Local Government Board and of the West Suffolk County Council).

Population 1881, 6,592. Population 1891, 7,059. Population 1901, 7,109.
Acreage 2,093. Number inhabited houses 1,590. Average number of persons per house 4.4

Physical site, valley of the Stour, in the upper Chalk formation, covered with drift sands, gravels and brick earth, derived from the boulder clay of general plateau.

The following vital statistics are compiled from the returns received from the District Registrar, and the Notification of Zymotic Diseases.

BIRTHS.

There were 114 births registered during the year, equivalent to a birth-rate of 15.8 per thousand of the population. This is the lowest number of births yet recorded in my annual reports. Though the birth-rate throughout England in declining, a drop of 20 per cent from the average of 150 births during the last ten years, is serious. The births and birth-rates in the borough during the previous seven years were :

			1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.
Births	...	...	158	155	159	138	134	140	139	114
Birth-rate	...	...	22.2	20.5	22.3	19.4	18.8	19.7	19.5	15.8

The average for the last ten years was 150 or 21.1 per thousand.

The birth-rate for 1908 in England and Wales was 26

DEATHS.

The total number of deaths from all causes registered in the district was 155 from which 43 deaths in the Workhouse and St. Leonard's Hospital of non-residents have to be subtracted, leaving the actual deaths as 112 equivalent to a death-rate of 15.5 per thousand of the population. The deaths and death-rates during the previous seven years were, —

			1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.
Deaths registered	...	...	152	138	143	140	146	115	142	155
Deaths belonging to the district	129		114	121	111	110	90	107	112	
Death-rate	...	...	18.1	15.7	17.0	15.6	15.4	12.6	14.8	15.5

The average for the last ten years was 112 or 15.8 per thousand.

The death-rate for 1908 in England and Wales was 14.7

The following table shows the relative age mortality among residents :—

Deaths	...	Under 1 year	1 to 5 years	5 to 15 years	15 to 25 years	25 to 65 years	Over 65 years
		8	3	2	6	36	57

Among the 57 deaths over 65 years, were 18 over the age of 80 years.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

There were 8 deaths of children under one year of age, about the lowest recorded in the Borough. Four of these were born prematurely. The practical instructions given to many mothers by the maternity nurse, on the care and feeding of infants, should do much to reduce the infantile death-rate, and so to some extent counter balance the decline in the birth-rate. The notification of Births Act, 1907 is not adopted.

The following is the record for the previous seven years.

			1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	1908.
Deaths of children under one year	22		21	15	19	13	15	16	8	
Rate per 1000 of births registered	139.0		130.0	94.3	137.6	97.0	107.1	115.0	70.0	

For 1908 in England and Wales it was 126

ZYMOTIC DEATHS.

One death occurred during the year, and was due to Scarlet Fever. The zymotic death-rate for the previous seven years was as follows :—

1901	1902	1903	1904	1905	1906	1907	1908
0.1	0.6	1.4	0.9	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.1

For 1908 in England and Wales it was 1.26

DEATHS FROM TUBERCULOSIS.

This disease caused 10 deaths, 7 of which were from Phthisis. The Public Health (Tuberculosis) regulations 1908, which now comes into operation, directs that all cases of pulmonary tuberculosis, which occur under the Poor Law, are to be notified to and kept under the inspection of the Medical Officer of Health. It is to be hoped that some provision for the isolation of advanced cases will also be made, as it is these which spread the disease.

Disinfection and cleansing of houses, after a death from phthisis, are always attended to.

DEATHS FROM OTHER CAUSES.

Among these were, from Cancer and Malignant Diseases 10. Bronchitis and Pneumonia 10. Heart Diseases 11. Accidents 3.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFICATION.

There were 29 notifications received during the year, of Scarlet Fever 25, and Erysipelas 4. The record of the previous seven years was as follows :

		Small Pox	Scarlet Fever	Diphtheria	Typhoid Fever	Puerperal Fever	Erysipelas	Total	Per 1000 of population.
1901	...	0	17	1	4	0	1	23	3.2
1902	..	0	3	1	3	0	6	13	1.8
1903	...	0	8	0	2	1	8	19	2.6
1904	...	0	61	6	1	0	1	69	9.6
1905	...	0	46	2	2	2	6	57	8.0
1906	...	0	5	3	1	0	2	11	1.5
1907	...	0	32	1	0	0	5	38	5.2
1908	...	0	25	0	0	0	4	29	4.0

The following are particulars of the Zymotic Disease which occurred :—

SCARLET FEVER.

Of the 25 cases which occurred, 8 were non-residents in the Workhouse. So that only 17 belonged to the town, and affected 13 families. Most of the cases occurred in the spring, at the same time with cases in the adjoining parishes, though no connections could be traced. In one family three children who all had genuine Scarlet Fever 18 months previously, were, strange to say, again attacked. The type of the disease was generally mild. Though one death occurred from an acute attack with complications.

All houses affected underwent a course of disinfection with formalin, and home cases were supplied with printed instructions, carbolised oil and disinfectants.

ERYSIPELAS.

The 4 cases which were notified were old people with facial attacks chiefly.

DIPHTHERIA.

Though no cases were notified, one of the children with Scarlet Fever showed decided symptoms, and antitoxin had to be supplied and injected.

MEASLES.

This disease became prevalent in July among the children in the infant classes of the schools, so that it became necessary to advise the closing of these classes a week before the Summer holidays.

THE ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

The great usefulness of this hospital in checking the spread of scarlet fever, was well manifested during the year, only 8 cases were admitted and all did well. Some structural improvements are much required, and are under consideration.

SCHOOLS, ELEMENTARY.

There are three schools, all in good sanitary condition, with town water supply. They have play grounds attached. The action taken to prevent the spread of infectious disease, is, on receiving notification of such, to exclude all children from infected houses, until disinfected. In cases of scarlet fever, to examine in the school, every child who has lately been absent. With respect to measles ; as this disease is generally confined to the infant classes, if it becomes prevalent, these classes are closed ; as was done during the summer. The Medical Inspection of school children is done by a whole time officer,

HOUSES.

There were 14 new houses erected and inspected during the year. Two cases of overcrowding were remedied by removal of surplus inmates. There are no building bye-laws yet adopted. The house accommodation for the working classes is adequate, with sufficient open space and cleanliness of surroundings. No action under the Housing of the Working Class Act is required.

WATER SUPPLY.

The Town Water Works maintained a continuous supply throughout the year. The water is derived from a deep boring in the chalk.

The systematic inspection and repair of taps and fittings has proved effective in preventing water waste.

The rainfall during the year as registered by Edward Ransom, Esq., was 19.32 inches, which is about 4 inches below the average.

The following is the Report of the Borough Surveyor and Inspector of Nuisances :—

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The bacteriological sewage installation has worked efficiently, and the effluent keeps at a fair standard according to tests. All the six pair of contact beds are in use, one of the older coarse beds has been cleaned. Three baffling walls have been placed in one of the septic tanks, to try and prevent the escape of putrid sludge on to the contact beds.

The storm water basin is now being filled with clinker from the Refuse Destructor, so that this effluent will undergo filtration,

The Refuse Destructor has worked satisfactorily, both in destroying the town refuse and pumping the sewage up to the septic tank and contact beds.

SEWERS AND DRAINS.

The general condition of the sewers and drains is satisfactory. Regular inspection and flushing have been continued. The complaints as to smells from the manholes, noted last year, have diminished, and would no doubt disappear with the more rapid passage of the sewage to the outfall, this acceleration would be increased by the general provision of flushing cisterns to all water closets, in place of hand flushing, which is still in use in much of the cottage property. The new public convenience in Chequer Lane has been largely used, receipts this year £2 8s. od.

Half a mile of ditches and culverts at rear of Ballingdon Street were cleaned out thoroughly.

HOUSE REFUSE.

There is still a great want of proper galvanized receptacles for collecting house refuse, to take the place of the ancient ashpit, which is often a nuisance. These would much facilitate the collection, and increase the calorific value of the refuse when placed in the refuse destructor.

HOUSE TO HOUSE INSPECTION.

Owing to the pressure of other work this inspection has not proceeded as rapidly as anticipated, efforts are now being made to have it completed.

The following is a statement of the number of notices, inspections, &c. made during the year :—

Number of written notices sent out, respecting defects and nuisances	97
Additional premises provided with Town water	11
Additional Closets provided with flushing cisterns	19
Number of houses and premises connected with the sewers, or redrained	21
Number of new houses completed	14
Number of houses disinfected	16
Number of schools disinfected	4
Number of house to house inspections	56
Number of nuisances abated	65
Number of slaughter-house inspections	174
Number of dairies and cowsheds inspections	31
Number of pigstyes inspected	9
Number of bakehouses inspected	13
Number of cases overcrowding abated	2

W. I. TAIT, A.M.I.C.E.,
Surveyor and Inspector.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

There are 19 Slaughter Houses in the Borough, of these 10 are fully licensed, and 9 for pigs only. These are inspected monthly during the year.

LODGING HOUSES.

There are 2 registered Common Lodging Houses, which have been at intervals visited. No breach of the regulations was found.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

As many Workshops have of late adopted mechanical power in the form of gas engines, they are included among Factories, which now number 30. Workshops and work-places in the register number 70. This includes 20 bakehouses. All have undergone inspection and have sufficient sanitary conveniences. Where persons of both sexes are employed, separate accommodation is provided, in accordance with Section 22 of the Public Health (amendment) Act.

All Factories employing over 40 workers have made reasonable provision in respect of safety from fire.

The lists of out-workers received show 23 in number. No complaints have been received during the year from H.M. Inspector of Factories.

BAKEHOUSES.

There are 20 bakehouses. No breaches of regulations were found when visited. There are no underground bakehouses in the town.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.

There are 20 cowkeepers in the district who have cowsheds and dairies and are purveyors of milk. All the cows are grass grazed. The Model Regulations, 1905, which were adopted in August, 1906, are in force. Visits of inspection have been made and the general condition of the dairies, cowsheds, and milk shops were found to be in accordance with the provisions of the Regulations in respect to lighting, ventilation, cleanliness, drainage and water supply. In one instance some defects were found which required alteration to drains.

GENERAL SANITATION.

Systematic as well as constant special inspections have been made during the year, as embodied in this Report.

No legal proceedings were necessary during the year.

Tabular statements, according to the forms supplied by the Local Government Board, of the statistics of births, sickness and mortality within the districts are appended to the official reports.

J. SINCLAIR HOLDEN, M.D.,
Medical Officer of Health,